

IN RE MATTER OF EMERGENCY
RESPONSE TO THE THREAT TO
PUBLIC HEALTH.

1. *What is the purpose of this document?*
 2. *What are the main findings of the study?*
 3. *What are the implications of the study?*
 4. *What are the limitations of the study?*
 5. *What are the conclusions of the study?*

1. On 02/29/20, Governor Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency due to the public health emergency posed by the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).
2. On 03/04/20, Chief Justice Debra Stephens of the Washington State Supreme Court adopted Order No. 25700-B-602, granting emergency authority upon all Washington Courts to adopt, modify, and/or suspend court rules and orders, and to take further actions concerning court operations, as warranted to address the current state of emergency.
3. On 03/11/20, the Governor imposed additional restrictions prohibiting gatherings of more than 250 people within King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties due to the danger of continued spread of the virus and the increasing danger the virus presents to the health care system in the region. The Health Officer for Public Health-Seattle and King County issued similar orders.
4. All divisions of the King County District Court and other area Municipal Courts have implemented orders and procedures limiting court operations in effort to further minimize the risk and danger associated with the spread of COVID-19 and the Kent Municipal Court followed suit with an order limiting procedure on 03/13/20.

5. On 03/16/20, the City of Kent closed all city buildings until further notice necessitating further order from this Court.

Accordingly, it is hereby ordered that effective Tuesday, March 17, 2020, with the exceptions set forth below, all currently scheduled court hearings will be postponed and rescheduled by the Court to a future date to be determined. Additionally, in accordance with the City's directive, and in the interest of the public health and safety, the Court will be closed to the public until further notice. This Court has reviewed the public health orders and the necessity of closing the Court and specifically finds that the public health concerns outweigh the right to public access under Boneclub during this emergency for any hearings conducted.

Exceptions include:

- a) By mail traffic infraction cases;
- b) All in-custody matters;
- c) Any hearing set upon judicial determination of an emergent need.

For all cases currently pending and for new cases filed during the pendency of this order, the delay/continuance of cases shall constitute an excluded period and/or be subject to this Court's now standing order suspending court rules for speedy trial purposes, which includes but not limited to, CrRLJ 3.3, CrRLJ 4.1, IRLJ 2.2, IRLJ 2.4, IRLJ 2.6, and any other applicable court rule.

It is FURTHER ORDERED that notices for future dates for all cases delayed by this order will be mailed to the parties via U.S. mail. Any party needing to update their mailing address should contact the court at (253) 856-5730.

The courthouse will be closed to the public until further notice. The public is encouraged to contact the Court by phone or email.

This order may be modified as circumstances change.

Dated this 16th day of March, 2020.



Michael Frans
Presiding Judge
Kent Municipal Court